



REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
NORFOLK DISTRICT CORPS OF ENGINEERS
FORT NORFOLK 803 FRONT STREET
NORFOLK VIRGINIA 23510-1096

April 11, 2005

Operations Branch

Churchland Residents
Portsmouth, VA 23703

Dear Neighbor,

The arrival of spring brings new life to many plants and animals. As you know, the warmer temperatures and wet weather can also lead to an increase in mosquito populations. The abundance of water and wetlands in and around Hampton Roads, including Craney Island, creates a breeding ground for mosquitoes. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers recognizes that our operations at Craney Island contribute to the overall mosquito population in Portsmouth. We are continuing to follow a comprehensive management strategy and working diligently to ensure that our objective of reducing the mosquito population at the Craney Island Dredged Material Management Area (CIDMMA) is achieved.

Our strategy is a multi-pronged approach, incorporating habitat control, larvae control, adult control and surveillance. During the upcoming mosquito season we will continue with aerial sprayings by both the Air Force and private contractor; use of larvicides such as Bti and Methoprene; and aggressive dewatering and grounds maintenance. In 2004 the facility and surrounding areas were sprayed six times; this year the Air Force has already made a test flight of the area in preparation for mosquito season. We also stocked areas of the facility with mosquito fish, a strategy that has been successful on the Navy's Craney Island Fuel Depot. In the past month, the southern boundary ditch has been treated with a 150-day larvicide.

There are several other initiatives that we promised to carry out and I'd like to update you on our progress to date.

- **Creating an interactive website.**

A website focusing on mosquito control initiatives taken by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has been developed. An interactive digital map of the Corps-operated Craney Island area is available on the site. Features on this map include aerial imagery, a nautical chart, mosquito spray areas and surveillance information. The mapping system will be used to track adult trap and larvae count data. The web address is as follows:

<http://www.nao.usace.army.mil/mosquitoes/>

- **Preparing and implementing a mosquito control plan.**

An integrated pest management plan for mosquito control has been completed. The document and related information can be found on our mosquito control website.

- **Implementing a source reduction project.**

We are currently working on a source reduction project, which is the removal of potential mosquito breeding habitat. Vegetation, mainly *Phragmites*, has invaded approximately 35 acres along CIDMMA's southern boundary. This vegetation has prevented the flow of rainwater off our property. We have already removed the majority of the vegetation and are currently grading the exposed area to allow for effective grounds maintenance. We are confident about the success of this project in reducing nuisance mosquito populations potentially breeding on CIDMMA. More detailed information and pictures can be found at the previously mentioned mosquito control website.

- **Stocking Craney Island with mosquito fish.**

Several thousand mosquito fish will be stocked again this spring in ditches and ponds on CIDMMA. Mosquito fish, *Gambusia*, reproduce rapidly and maintain a large appetite for mosquito larvae.

- **Updating the Environmental Assessment (EA) to include additional control measures.**

The Supplemental EA has been finalized and the District Engineer signed a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) on 15 Feb 05 which allows the use of two additional pesticides for mosquito larvae control, and two herbicides for the control of *Phragmites*, which is an invasive reed that provides habitat for mosquitoes. These documents and related information can be found on our mosquito control website.

- **Awarding mosquito control and surveillance contracts.**

A contract for mosquito surveillance and ground control measures has been awarded. Also, a contract for aerial application of larvicides (i.e. pesticides targeting mosquito larvae) has been advertised. Our approved budget in fiscal year 2005 for mosquito control contracts is \$145,000 for Craney Island. In addition, our budget for Corps' personnel support on mosquito control is estimated at \$50,000.

We are also communicating and coordinating our efforts with the City of Portsmouth and the U.S. Navy to pool our resources and information. It is important that we all work together. There are links on our website that contain valuable information about what you can do to reduce mosquitoes around your home and neighborhood.

Should you have any additional questions or concerns regarding our ongoing mosquito control initiatives, please contact Mr. Keith Lockwood of my staff at 201-7127.

Sincerely,



William A. Sorrentino, Jr., P.E.
Chief, Technical Services Division